

the ancient games. First staged in 1896 in Athens, the games attracted about 245 athletes to participate in 43 events. At the Sydney 2000 Games, more than 10,000 athletes took part in 300 events.

The Olympic Movement has survived wars, boycotts and terrorism to become a symbol of the ability of the people of all nations to come together in peace and friendship. And in 2004, the games return to their birthplace.

The Greek Government has made tremendous progress in recent months to improve the security infrastructure for the upcoming games and wish them the best as they prepare for the challenge of hosting the world's premiere athletic event.

I represent a large and active Greek-American community, and I have been proud to support U.S. participation in negotiations over Cyprus, the fight for freedom and human rights for all Cypriots, the inclusion of Greece in the Visa Waiver Pilot Program, and the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew.

I congratulate the people of Greece on the anniversary of their independence, and I look forward to working together with Greek-Americans and the Greek Government on issues of mutual interest in the years ahead.

HONORING KASEY MILLISKI

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Kasey Milliski upon her nomination as a Jefferson Award finalist. Ms. Milliski is a volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House Charities. The Ronald McDonald House provides a "home-away-from-home" for families of children being treated at nearby hospitals, and she has dedicated herself to helping many Delaware families in need.

Ms. Milliski's passion for volunteer work was born out of her own personal hardships. In turn, she continues to reach out to sick children and their families with kindness and compassion. Ms. Milliski's simple approach to helping others is genuine and has a profound impact on many.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Ms. Milliski upon her nomination as a finalist for the Jefferson Award. She is truly worthy of this honor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, on March 25, 2004, because of my leave of absence, I was unable to vote on legislation. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall 84, Previous Question on H. Con. Res. 393, "no";

Rollcall 85, H.R. 3786, allowing the Treasury to print documents for foreign governments, "yes";

Rollcall 86, H.R. 2993, Extend the Commemorative Coin Act, "yes";

Rollcall 87, H.R. 254, North American Development Bank, "yes";

Rollcall 88, H. Con. Res. 393, Budget Resolution, Congressional Black Caucus Substitute, "no";

Rollcall 89, H. Con. Res. 393, Stenholm/Blue Dog Substitute, "yes";

Rollcall 90, H. Con. Res. 393, Spratt/Democratic Substitute, "yes";

Rollcall 91, H. Con. Res. 393, H. Con. Res. 393, Final Passage, "no";

Rollcall 92, H.R. 3095, Allowing Local Officials to Order the Lowering of the U.S. Flag to Honor Deaths of Current or Past Local Government Employees, "yes".

HONORING MRS. NANCY O'CONNOR OF BUENA VISTA, COLORADO

HON. BOB BEAUPREZ

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a woman of great spirit and integrity.

Mrs. Nancy O'Connor has been a friend of mine for many years. She has utilized her passion for our democratic system to assist many Republicans like myself by serving on various campaigns. Nancy is one of the most sincere and generous individuals I have had the pleasure of knowing.

In addition to her 20 years of hard work for the good of the Republican Party, Nancy is the wife of Mr. Richard O'Connor and a wonderful mother to Mrs. Roxanne Hansen and Ms. Amber O'Connor. Nancy and Richard moved to Chaffee County, Colorado in 1971 to establish Hummingbird Hill Ranch and have been active community members ever since.

Nancy has also been a respected real estate broker for over 30 years. She has been the recipient of many awards for her dedication, including the recognition as fifth in the nation for sales under United County Real Estate in 2003 and fourth in the nation for 2002. She is also a respected Rotarian, member of the Chaffee County Republican Women and has been the Chairwoman of the Chaffee County Republican Party for 16 years.

Nancy has been a leader for many community service efforts in her community. For 12 years she has given her time and her wonderful talents as a cook to raising money for the Buena Vista High School Presidential Classroom project. She has helped many young men and women in her community to participate in this extraordinary experience by sponsoring the annual lasagna dinner with the Chaffee County Republican Women, and making enough homemade lasagna every year to feed an average of 250 people.

During her two-year term as President of the Buena Vista Rotary Club, in addition to winning the Humanitarian Service to Mankind Award, Nancy also led an effort to restructure the playground at Columbine Park for the kids of Buena Vista. Her efforts raised enough money to buy new equipment and not only add fun for local youth, but improved the community atmosphere as well.

To say the least, Nancy is an extraordinary woman with a very kind heart. She brightens the day of anyone she encounters and is al-

ways willing to offer a helping hand to those in need. To this day, she continues to send homemade cookies to myself and the other Colorado Republican delegation to say thank you for what we do.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Nancy for all that she does.

HONORING JIM ELLISON

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Jim Ellison upon his nomination as a Jefferson Award finalist. For over 25 years, Mr. Ellison has aided Delawareans who are confronting personal crises. As a volunteer for CONTACT, Delaware's crisis line, Mr. Ellison has logged a state record of 8,553 hours, many of which he accumulated during the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift.

Mr. Ellison's lifetime of service has had no limit. Prior to becoming a volunteer, he worked 29 years as a revenue officer for the Internal Revenue Service. Mr. Ellison also served in the Army Air Corps and from January 1944 until August 1945, Mr. Ellison cleaned machine guns for B-24 bombers.

Jim Ellison's tireless dedication to the well-being of others should serve as an inspiration to us all. He is a most worthy candidate for the Jefferson Award and a truly outstanding Delawarean and American.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Mr. Ellison upon his nomination as a finalist for the Jefferson Award. May we all learn from, and exemplify, his selflessness.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHIE PEREZ

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to pay tribute to the life of Richie Perez—a longtime community activist who lived in Brooklyn.

Richie Perez was a fighter. He fought for the rights of all people, and he fought against the devastating inequities that plague our society. He fought for the poor, the disenfranchised, the downtrodden—and gave them a voice.

His passion for activism began in the 1960s as a former member of the community-based organization for Puerto Rican empowerment called the Young Lords Party. He most recently founded the National Congress for Puerto Rican rights, acting as the co-chair of its Justice Committee, which works with families of victims of racial discrimination and police brutality.

He was a mentor to many and a hero to even more. He imparted his ideas and philosophies onto others by teaching classes on the Puerto Rican experience in New York, mass media and social policy at New York City's Hunter College. Not only was he an activist and a teacher, but he was an author as

well, publishing several groundbreaking written works.

Richie Perez was a truth-seeker. Wherever he went, he spoke the truth, lived by the truth, and inspired the truth in others. He embodied the meaning of righteousness and what is good and real in our local communities. He believed in giving people a second chance, and in fighting back against the injustices that had imperiled them.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Richie Perez, and join with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to recognize his extraordinary life.

TRIBUTE TO THE NFA CONVENTION IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA

HON. RIC KELLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the National Franchise Association (NFA), the association of Burger King franchisees. The NFA will be in Orlando May 3–6, 2004 for its 12th Annual Convention and Tradeshow. I am delighted the NFA has chosen once again to return to Orlando. In fact, this will be the third time the NFA has visited Orlando with nearly 3,500 Burger King franchisees, vendors, and other participants. With its theme parks and attractions, Orlando is one of our Nation's premier vacation and convention destinations—it's clear to see why groups like NFA want to return to Orlando over and over again. The theme of this year's NFA convention, "The Magic of the Fire," is quite apropos as it combines the "Magic" of Orlando and the entrepreneurial "Fire" of the Burger King franchisees.

Two Burger King franchisees, in particular, have been instrumental in bringing the Burger King family to Orlando. They are Julian Josephson and Dominick Vespoli.

Julian Josephson, the Chairman of the NFA, has a story very similar to many of our immigrant ancestors who brought their entrepreneurial spirit to this country seeking a brighter future. Julian moved to the United States from Johannesburg, South Africa in 1978. Since then, he and his business partner Stanley Smiedt, have built a successful business that includes nearly 40 Burger King Restaurants in Southern California, Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado. Julian has not only provided exceptional leadership to the NFA as chairman and vice president, he has served his community through numerous initiatives. Julian has been a dedicated husband and father to his wife Jenny and their children Heidi and Anthony. Julian and Jenny are the proud grandparents of Maya Silberstein.

Dominick Vespoli is the Convention Chairman. Dominick grew up in Jersey City, New Jersey and began working in Burger King restaurants in 1974. He worked in a variety of jobs learning the skills needed to run successful restaurants. In 1990, Dominick became a Burger King franchisee. He, and his business partner Nathan Blau, now own and operate 10 successful Burger King restaurants in New Jersey. Dominick has been a dedicated husband and father to his wife Celenia and their two sons, Jason and James.

The restaurant industry as a whole employs 12 million men and women, a significant driving force for our economy. I commend Julian and Dominick, and their fellow franchise owners, for their contributions to job creation and economic growth. These entrepreneurs are the backbone of our economy. I wish to thank them for their outstanding service to the NFA and their commitment to their communities. I look forward to seeing them both and the other Burger King franchisees when they visit Orlando in May.

HONORING JEFFREY BUSCH

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Jeffrey Busch upon his selection as the Jefferson Award winner in Delaware. Mr. Busch is the founder and chairman of Safe Blood for Africa, an organization dedicated to stemming the tide of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. With true innovative spirit, he has brought a business approach to the logistical problems of getting safe blood to this region. Mr. Busch is not only a commendable American citizen, he is an exemplary citizen of the world.

With the utmost humility, Mr. Busch ensures safe blood for transfusions in 20 sub-Saharan African nations. His organization also protects Africans from the spread of such diseases as hepatitis B and C and syphilis. One would never know to speak to Mr. Busch that he has likely spared thousands of Africans from the dangers of HIV and AIDS.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Jeffrey Busch upon his selection as the Jefferson Award winner in Delaware. His selflessness serves as an example to us all. Furthermore, it has been my sincere privilege to know Mr. Busch personally, and I am very proud to that he is a Delawarean.

RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 29, 2004

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the American Legion, a noble organization, chartered by Congress in 1919. The American Legion turned 85 this week and its members across our Nation are celebrating this historic event.

I'm proud to report that my home district celebrated this occasion recently at an event hosted by Retired Air Force Colonel Ted Buck of Mt. Vernon. He served 22 years active duty including 30 months during the Vietnam War. He received two Distinguished Flying Crosses, The Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with a Silver Star and the Purple Heart. He was also awarded the Legion of Merit award for his duty as a pilot for Dr. Henry Kissinger on his historic shuttle diplomacy.

I mention Colonel Buck by name because he puts a face on an organization made up of

many heroic men and women who, like Colonel Buck, have put their lives on the line for this Nation. While patriotism and support for our men and women in uniform comes in and out of favor here in Washington, D.C. our Nation is blessed to have an organization that exists to meet the needs of our veterans. I consider myself fortunate to be a member of the American Legion and I'm honored to have the opportunity to wish them a happy 85th birthday. I speak for all of my colleagues in wishing the American Legion many more years to continue their work to insure appropriate respect for the American veteran and their families.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 2004

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 393) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2005 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2004 and 2006 through 2009:

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Chairman, a few days ago, I reluctantly voted for the budget resolution that was thoroughly debated on the House floor. My reluctance in voting for the budget was based on one main cause, my concern for our nation's veterans. Even though we increased funding in veterans' care once again, I believe there was further room for improvement.

The budget that we passed is a step forward in the areas of deficit reduction and spending control. I am heartened by our efforts to cap some areas of government spending but disappointed that we continue to debate the proper level of veterans' funding. In the past months, there has been great discussion in the funding that these brave individuals who have sacrificed so much for our country will receive from the VA. With that discussion, I believe that we should never lose sight of what these veterans have accomplished and what they have meant to our Nation's freedom.

As this process moves forward, I believe that there are additional areas of the budget that can be curtailed to further supplement our veterans' funding needs. For example, we should continue to scrutinize our massive foreign aid budget for savings that can be returned to the U.S. shores and to the veterans' needs.

In the end, I voted for this budget because we must continue the process and we will have opportunities to improve our veterans' funding. Additionally, to delay this budget means we delay our national defense and our homeland security priorities. To delay this budget risks not having a budget at all and that leaves no barriers to government spending. In a time of war, we can not allow that to happen.

We must all work hard to improve the budget before it comes to conference. I hope that